



Successes published



Veronica moves from limousine service into the medical field. Yurie starts out with substandard grammar and reading comprehension scores — she'll student teach in math next year. Tammy got her GED and 30

college credits and is on her way to nursing school. Erika speaks up — in English — to city

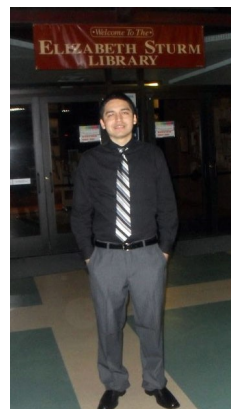
authorities.

Arnulfo learns to value education. Rudy and Miguel learned English and are now taking college-level courses.

Haby and

Svetlana become citizens.

Read about these Adult Education students and many more in "Student Success Stories" and "New Beginnings." Visit the Nevada Adult Educators Web site (www.nvadulted.org/) for links!



U.S. District Court Judge Lloyd D. George, Haby Gory, Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman, and USCIS Phoenix District 25 Director John Kramar

Our brains and our biases

A recent RaceBridges for Schools Diversity Memo notes "brain research is all the rage these days. It seems every day we hear of a new discovery about how behavior and emotions are linked to brain chemistry and development. Many traits and behaviors that were once attributed to character or upbringing can now be linked to specific sites and functions of the brain."

Many teachers are interested in the advances in brain research, as they reveal why some students excel in certain subjects while others struggle. These educators know how to use varied teaching methods to capitalize on particular periods of brain development.

What we have gained from brain research in the fields of mental health and education applies to issues of bias as well. We now understand that it "makes sense" for our brains to categorize those who differ from us and to assume that we are better than others.

But just because it is "natural" for our brains to work this way doesn't mean that we have to accept prejudice and discrimination as fact. Rather, knowing how our brains work helps us move our focus from guilt about our own biased thinking and judgments about our students' prejudices to learning how to counteract what our brains do naturally. We can teach our brains to work in new, egalitarian ways.

The organization offers several resources that can help remove some of the "heat" that attends most discussions about racism, stereotypes, and prejudice and instead focus on solutions.

Visit www.racebridgesforschools.com and search for "suspicious brain." You'll find a classroom activity, some lesson plan starters, other resources, and some ideas to help inspire you.

Free tax help

The IRS' [VITA \(Volunteer Income Tax Assistance\) Program](http://www.irs.gov/vita) offers free tax help by IRS-certified volunteers to low- to moderate-income (generally, \$49,000 and below) people. The [AARP Tax-Aide Program](http://www.irs.gov/aitp) also trains and certifies volunteers to help low- and middle-income taxpayers prepare and file their income tax returns with the IRS.

Making \$en\$ out of dollar\$

Excerpted from an article by Brittany Kellerman and Leah N. Diaz in *Texas Adult and Family Literacy Quarterly*, January 2011, www-tcall.tamu.edu/publicationtoc.htm

Each year \$247 million is drained from African-American and Latino communities by payday loan fees. Approximately 43% of Hispanic households are either unbanked or under-banked. Thousands of dollars in tax credits are left unclaimed by low- and moderate-income families annually.⁽¹⁾

The need for financial literacy is clear. Here are three resources to help you help your students create a financial base for their future — be it attaining a postsecondary education or obtaining family-sustaining employment.



The FDIC's [Money Smart training program](#) has been the “go to” resource on

basic financial literacy for adult educators since its launch in 2001. It contains 11 instructor-led units covering basic financial topics such as saving, budgeting, checking account management, credit history reports, credit cards, loans, home loans, and consumer rights. Each unit includes a guide for instructors, overhead slides in PowerPoint and PDF format, and resource material for class participants — all reproducible. Although not written at a new reader level, the curriculum could be used in advanced ESL classes. There is also a version for computer-based instruction, all available online, at no cost.

Financing career preparation

The Money Smart information is necessary, but for our adult education students to move beyond the GED and enroll in postsecondary training and study, they need information about student financial aid, the college enrollment process, and viable career paths in the current economy, as well as guidance in assessing their personal skills and career interests. The [Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom Curriculum](#), a project of World Education, can be useful to both teachers and career counselors. These instructional materials are designed for students whose skill levels are ABE Intermediate High through ASE High, and Low Intermediate ESL through Advanced ESL Literacy.

The 210-page *Integrating Career Awareness Curriculum Guide* is divided into four sections: The Cultural Context of Career Awareness; The Self-

Exploration Process (skills, values, experience, interests, education); Occupational Exploration (occupational and job profiles, informational interviews, career and job fairs, and labor market information); and Career Planning Skills (financial activities include goal setting, college success skills, decision making, action planning, educational options, and financial aid).

Each lesson clearly outlines the learning objectives, materials needed, vocabulary, associated SCANS Competencies, and extension activities. The lessons are diverse and vary in learning styles. The handouts are in Word® document form so they can easily be changed to fit local career and college realities. For example, local job search tools and Web sites can be inserted into handout activities to make them real and relevant to the learners. Teachers and counselors are encouraged to work as a team to implement the curriculum across the program.

The *Curriculum Guide* and all handouts are available on CD and can also be downloaded from the National College Transition Network at www.collegetransition.org (click on publications).

Adult learners identify financial concerns as their greatest barrier to college. [Mapping Your Financial Journey: Helping Adults Plan for College](#) is an excellent 56-page resource, also distributed by NCTN, that addresses all aspects of financial planning for college.

⁽¹⁾ *Center for Responsible Lending*, 2009; *FDIC*, 2009; *EITC Central (Earned Income Tax Credit, IRS)*, 2009

Where Will I Put It All?

A man was standing in line at the bank when a commotion started at the counter.

A woman was distressed, exclaiming, "Where will I put my money? I have all my money and mortgage here! What will happen to my mortgage?"

It turned out that she had misunderstood a small sign on the counter. The sign read:

WE WILL BE CLOSED FOR GOOD FRIDAY

— *Laugh Lines for Educators*,
Diane Hodges, 2006



NAE News — more Webinars on tap



The NAE Board is planning two more Webinars, free to members: Twitter Literacy for Adult Educators this spring and Social Media in the Classroom for later in the year. Members will be notified of the dates via email.

To renew or join the only organization devoted to adult education in Nevada, visit www.nvadulthood.org.



National Adult English Language Learning
Professional Development Network

Online University for ESL teachers now enrolling!

English Language Learner University (www.ell-u.org) is an innovative, free learning portal developed especially for the U.S. Department of Education/Office of Vocational and Adult Education. ELL-U provides English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) educators with free online professional development and learning opportunities. Here educators can access training on evidence-based instruction, information from leading adult ESOL experts, and other resources. The site aims to build a community of practice for ESOL professionals. Register to access the course catalog, currently showing these online sessions for April and May:

Second Language Acquisition: Myths, Beliefs, and What the Research Shows (3 hours)

This course offers participants a research-based introduction to second language acquisition (SLA) by exploring common myths and beliefs about how languages are taught and learned. This course will counter or clarify popular views about SLA and help course participants examine, develop, challenge, and support their knowledge and beliefs about how adults learn a new language.

The Role of the First Language in Learning English: Asset or Barrier? (4 hours)

Is the first language an asset or a barrier to learning English? Participants in this online study circle will have the opportunity to read about and discuss how the home language influences the learning of English. Teachers will share their own experiences and have the opportunity to apply their learning in their own classrooms.

Free online discussions with students or colleagues

Source: OTAN (Outreach and Technical Assistance Network), Online Connection, Winter 2011

If you are looking for a way to engage your online or face-to-face learners in conversation, have them practice their writing, and provide another medium for shy learners to participate — discussion boards or forums may just be the tool for you! A forum is hierarchical or tree-like in structure: forum - subforum - topic - thread - reply. A single conversation is called a "thread." Most services offer the possibility of creating multiple topics and forums.

Most new social media and learning management systems, such as Blackboard and Moodle, have built-in forums. If you don't have access to Blackboard or Moodle, here are a few free services to try:

- Tal.ki (<http://tal.ki>) - a service for creating and embedding a forum into an existing Web site
- ProBoards (www.proboards.com)
- FreeForums (www.freeforums.org)



Nevada's Adult Education Community (<http://nevadasadulthoodeducationcommunity.org>) is a forum where teachers and staff discuss issues and share lessons and resources.

It's easy to create a (free) account and post your comments, questions, and ideas.

For more information, contact Claudia Bianca (cbianca@tmcc.edu, 775/824-8604) or Dawnne Ernette (dernette@tmcc.edu).

This professional development project is a leadership activity funded by a grant from the Nevada State Department of Education, Workforce Investment Act, Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy). There is no discrimination or denial of participation on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion or religious creed, national origin, sexual orientation, ancestry, or disability.

Talk to your legislators!

Now is the time to ensure our lawmakers have the information they need to make informed decisions about adult education funding.

Nevada's legislature is in session and is scheduled to adjourn June 6.

Brad Deeds, Adult Education Director, reminds us, "Our national legislators have regularly scheduled 'Constituent Work Weeks' and recesses where they return to Nevada to meet with their constituents. They could be invited to GED graduations, Open Houses, student celebrations, etc." The calendar for 2011:

- March 21 - March 25 Constituent Work Week
- April 18 - 29 Spring Recess
- May 16 - May 20 Constituent Work Week
- June 6 - June 10 Constituent Work Week
- June 27 - July 1 Constituent Work Week
- July 18 - July 22 Constituent Work Week
- August 8 - September 2 August Recess
- September 26 - September 30 Constituent Work Week
- October 17 - October 21 Constituent Work Week
- November 7 - November 10 Constituent Work Week
- November 21 - November 25 Constituent Work Week

To find your federal and state representatives, enter your address in the search box at <http://goo.gl/qEjf9>.

